

# Promoting a National Youth Policy

“Formulation of the National Youth Policy is the easy stage in national youth development. Promotion and implementation of the document and its themes is much more difficult, and requires the design and use of clear and specific strategies”.

Planning Document, Ministry of Labor and Home Affairs,  
Government of Botswana

There is a great danger that a national youth policy document remains “on the shelf”, unknown and unread by the broader community and especially by young men and women. To avoid this scenario, attention must be given to publication details and promotion strategies

## (A) Publication details

It is vital that a country’s national youth policy is read, studied and discussed by as many organisations and individuals as possible, especially by those involved in youth development activities. It is essential that young women and men find the document attractive and easy to read in style, language and layout. It is important that the

document does not appear as another typical government publication!

Suggestions for enhancing the relevance and attractiveness of a national youth policy as a publication include:

- ★ Publication of the national youth policy as an easy to read booklet with graphics and illustrations that appeal to young men and women.
- ★ Use of an attractive and compelling title. Some examples include “Making the Future Work for Young Women and Men”, “Our Stake in the Future”, “Youth Growing with the Nation”, “Youth – the Nation Today, the Nation Tomorrow”, “Youth: for a better tomorrow”...
- ★ Use of the term ‘youth’ only as a category or objective eg. youth sector, youth policy, etc. The preferred term ‘young women and men’ (alternated) should be used where possible, to describe individuals or groups.
- ★ Use of headings and point form.
- ★ Publication of the policy statement in all key national languages.
- ★ Careful consideration of type face, binding and colours.
- ★ Avoidance of gender bias language.
- ★ Attention to style and language. The language style should be clear, direct and simple. Language should be varied and fresh, including use of symbolic words and phrases. Correct grammar, punctuation and spelling are essential to reinforce an impression of competence, professionalism and national significance.
- ★ Use of ‘glossary of terms’ and ‘abbreviations/acronyms’ pages.

## (B) Promotion strategies

Attention must be given to ensuring that the key themes of the national youth policy are disseminated throughout the country. Besides ensuring its distribution to all agencies and groups involved with young people, it is important that young women and men have the opportunity to consider its relevance to their own lives.

Upon the release of the policy, there is the need for some form of national campaign aimed at promoting a broad awareness and understanding of the document, and the roles that young women and men and all relevant agencies can play in achieving its objectives. This campaign should target young women and men, youth related agencies and the broader community (including the family, private sector, service clubs and chambers of commerce, etc.) and could include any or all of the following elements:

★ **The formation of a National Youth Policy Promotion Team, which would be responsible for:**

- ① co-ordinating a campaign to highlight the existence and content of the policy and the accompanying national action plan (see Part 5 of this handbook).
- ② conducting a series of regional workshops for representatives of relevant government ministries and local workers with young people.
- ③ popularising the policy amongst young men and women through the use of opportunities which offer direct contact with young people (e.g. schools, youth clubs, NGOs, informal gatherings of young people, and vocational settings).

Such a project should last a minimum of six months and provide the opportunity for the inclusion of young women and men as team members. Attention to the design and development of the appropriate support tools is essential, including the preparation of a set of attractive posters, overhead transparencies or slides, and display cards; selection of appropriate ice breaker exercises, idea generation activities, discussion material, use of music, etc.

★ **Design and implementation of a media promotional strategy which should consider the inclusion of the following:**

- ① Preparation and distribution of a press release from the most appropriate government leader (e.g. the State President or the Minister for Youth Affairs) to all media outlets. The press release needs to stress the national significance of the policy and provide a summary of the document.
- ② Organisation of a national launch, preferably involving the Head of State and supported by the relevant Minister for Youth Affairs. (Further provincial launches may also be required).
- ③ Electronic media, including video, for use at launch and subsequent promotional meetings.
- ④ The participation of the Youth Minister, key government officials in television and radio talk back programmes to explain and discuss the content and implications of the national youth policy.
- ⑤ Preparation of specific national youth policy statements for inclusion in key publications targeting young women and men, and workers with young people.
- ⑥ Preparation of short advertisements (depending upon the availability of funds and the possibility of sponsorship) which outline the key themes of the policy as well as providing contact details for those who wish to receive a copy of the policy.